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STAGE IT'S THE LAST EMPEROR AS
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今日北京

BEIJING TODAY

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'80S ART

WU STARTED WITH NOSTALGIA,
THEN ADDED A DASH OF COOL
TO CREATE HIS FAMOUS
GENRE-DEFYING KIDS **P.4**



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FEATURE STORY



Young Parents Toss China's Future to Their Elders

BY DIAO DIAO

The Web has been abuzz with news that an elderly man ordered his granddaughter to urinate on a public bus in Hangzhou, Zhengjiang province.

When the girl correctly attempted to exit the bus and find a toilet, her grandfather stopped her and ordered her to pee on the floor in front of the other passengers. Photographs of the incident were widely circulated on Sina Weibo.

While the crossover of rural toilet habits into urban areas is nothing new, the incident has urged discussion about modern China's pattern of childrearing.

A survey by Xinhua.net found that more than half of Beijing's youngsters are primarily raised by their grandparents in a phenomenon being dubbed "cross-generational education."

Easy Way Out

While many parents are quick to blame public schools for not guiding their children, they forget that a child's pre-school years exert a greater influence.

More than half of all children under the age of five are raised primarily by their grandparents. Even by the age of seven, 35 percent remain in their grandparents' care.

It's not hard to understand why the new generation of Chinese parents is "throwing" their babies to their elders. Salaries for workers born in the 1980s have been slow to rise and most young parents work extremely long hours just to make ends meet.

On the surface, a baby and a pair of retired grandparents in need of company seems like the perfect match.

Chi Yuyang is a banker in Sichuan province and the mother of a young girl. Her job does not allow her to take weekends off nor does her work day have anything resembling fixed hours.

"My husband and I are too busy to even look after ourselves. We have to rely

on my parents and they love to do the job," she said.

Most young parents believe the older generation is more experienced in all things related to children. Moreover, as more grandparents enter retirement they have a surplus of time and patience.

While grandparents all over the world adore grandchildren, the relationship becomes twisted when seen through the lens of China's family planning policy. With only one grandchild between two families, many grandparents have gotten into brutal conflicts over "parenting rights."

One woman surnamed Zhou said her parents and her in-laws battle for time with her son. "I would rather look after him myself," she said. "He's a boy and the only child in both families. I'm afraid he will be spoiled."

Spoiler Alert

Zhou's fears are hardly unreasonable. Nothing spoils a child faster than the total adoration of four stay-at-home grandparents.

Wang Na, a teacher at Etonkids International Kindergarten, said grandparents often take care of too many things for a child in a misguided attempt to compensate up for their own difficult childhood.

"We often see some old grandparents preparing everything for the kid," Wang said. "They think they are helping out, but they just make their grandchild lose the chance to become independent and strong."

Wang also said other conflicts arise between "tradition" and science.

"I constantly conflict with my mother-in-law over what she is teaching my son," said Li Yang, a 28-year-old mother. "Even when I know she is wrong, I can't say anything or she will get angry."

Wang Jisheng, a tutor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Psychology, said a lack of education is the root of

many parent-grandparent conflicts.

The education and guidance a child receives during his or her first seven years are critical to personality development, Wang said. However, more than 95 percent of young parents are unfamiliar with the principles of early education. Wang said that among grandparents the percentage nears 100.

A similar survey conducted by the Civil Affairs Bureau found that 24 percent of the grandparents had any university education, 43 percent had only completed middle school and the remainder never finished primary school.

In addition to cross-generational education, divorce and abandonment are a growing problem.

When couples split up, their children are almost always left with the grandparents. In some cases, they are completely abandoned.

More than 3 million are left to live exclusively with their grandparents in rural China.

Finding Solutions

Many cities are now offering open lectures and training sessions to provide grandparents with the basics of early education.

The Beijing Family Development Association began its "cross-generational education" project in 2012. As part of the program, many schools, kindergartens and communities are offering child rearing lectures for both parents and grandparents.

Similar programs are available in Bohai, Shandong province and Hangzhou. There is also a series of television programs offering remote courses in early education.

But while most of these efforts are focused on helping grandparents to be more effective guardians, parents need to take responsibility and play a bigger role in their children's early years, Wang said. ■



KIDS Cross-generational education is the most direct cause of China's spoiled children.

CFP Photos

MUSIC



Mongolian Rockers Seek New Sound in Folk

BY DIAO DIAO

Most of China's young musicians throw themselves into soaking up foreign styles like rock and jazz in their attempt to create something new.

And then there are bands like Ajinai.

Ajinai is one of several Beijing groups that have retreated deep into the world of folk to find a new old sound. It's a movement championed by some of China's most internationally recognized acts like fellow Mongolian rockers Hanggai.

Founded in 2009, Ajinai takes its name from a Sanskrit phrase that means "majestic stallion." Armed with traditional musical tools like horsehead fiddles and a mastery of throat singing, the band merges its folk foundation with guitars, harmonicas and pianos. Their new take on traditional beats takes a page from blues and ska.

While the lineup remains fluid, Ajinai has been steered through three albums by its founding member Hujiletu.

Hujiletu said the band's core is made up of *beipiao*, people who have come from across the nation to scrape out a life in Beijing.

In the last two months, the band has been invited to the FMM Sines Music Festival in Portugal and showcases in Denmark, Slovakia and Austria. The tour abroad was relaxing and gave the band a host of new ideas to incorporate into their music.

"It feels really different to play these shows abroad," Hujiletu said. While Chinese listeners tend to prefer a more mainstream sound, unusual folk bands win their fan base among foreigners.

With 56 ethnic groups and deep regional divides, China has one of the most diverse folk music traditions in the world. But much of the music is being left behind in favor of standardized pop. Ajinai and other bands are holding out hope for a folk revival.

"Musical styles can always experience reincarnation. Just as people are rediscovering early rock and blues today, we

think the trend will eventually come back around to folk," Hujiletu said. "We would rather be ahead of the trend than mere followers."

Hujiletu's confidence comes from a love of Mongolian music and the associated instruments and techniques. "Khoomei and the morin khuur are two of the best known sounds in Mongolian music, but there are less common ones like long song and tsuur that we're trying to bring into our music," he said.

Earlier albums were written entirely by Hujiletu, but now more members are joining in the composition. "Ideas come from experience. Collaborating allows us to combine our ideas and make something more touching," he said.

But with the pressures of life as a *beipiao*, the band does not have fixed times for writing sessions. Its creation process is considerably more organic, Hujiletu said.

While Ajinai experiences the same internal conflicts that plague any band, Hujiletu said they are held together by an agreement to put being a mature person ahead of personal ego. "Our members all work as music instructors and know that learning to be a real person is one of the most difficult things in the world – but it's something that has to precede any success," he said.

Ajinai is participating in the World Music Expo (WOMEX) in Galicia, Spain in October. It will be back in China in November for the tour of *Synthesis*, their newest EP released on the Indie Music label in June. ■

Other Ajinai Albums

🎧 *Ajinai Band Live* (2010)

🎧 *Ajinai* (2011)



Ajinai albums
Photos by Hujiletu

LIVE SHOW ROUNDUP

Beijing boasts one of the world's most vibrant indie music scenes. Support our local artists with a trip to one of this week's live performances!

Asian Metal Night @ Yugongyishan

Yugongyishan is hosting a night of metal with some of the heaviest bands in Asia. China's Ego Fall is being joined on stage by Korea's Dark Mirror Ov Tragedy and Japan's Ethereal Sin Description.

🕒 September 28, 7:30-11 pm

📍 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng

💎 100 yuan (pre sale); 150 yuan (at door); ladies free

Goushen @ School Bar

Shanghai noise rockers Goushen are stopping at School Bar for the Beijing leg of their national tour. They will be joined on stage by fellow Shanghai band Round Eye and the local Bedstars.

🕒 October 1, 9:30-11:30 pm

📍 53 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng

💎 50 yuan

Beijing Alchemists & Me Too @ V.A. Bar

The Beijing Alchemists mix British, American and Asian blues and folk to present original songs and covers.

Me Too creates complex psychedelic punk while standing at the crossroads of Eastern and Western music.

🕒 October 3, 10 pm-2 am

📍 13 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng

💎 40 yuan



'Bad Education' @ School Bar

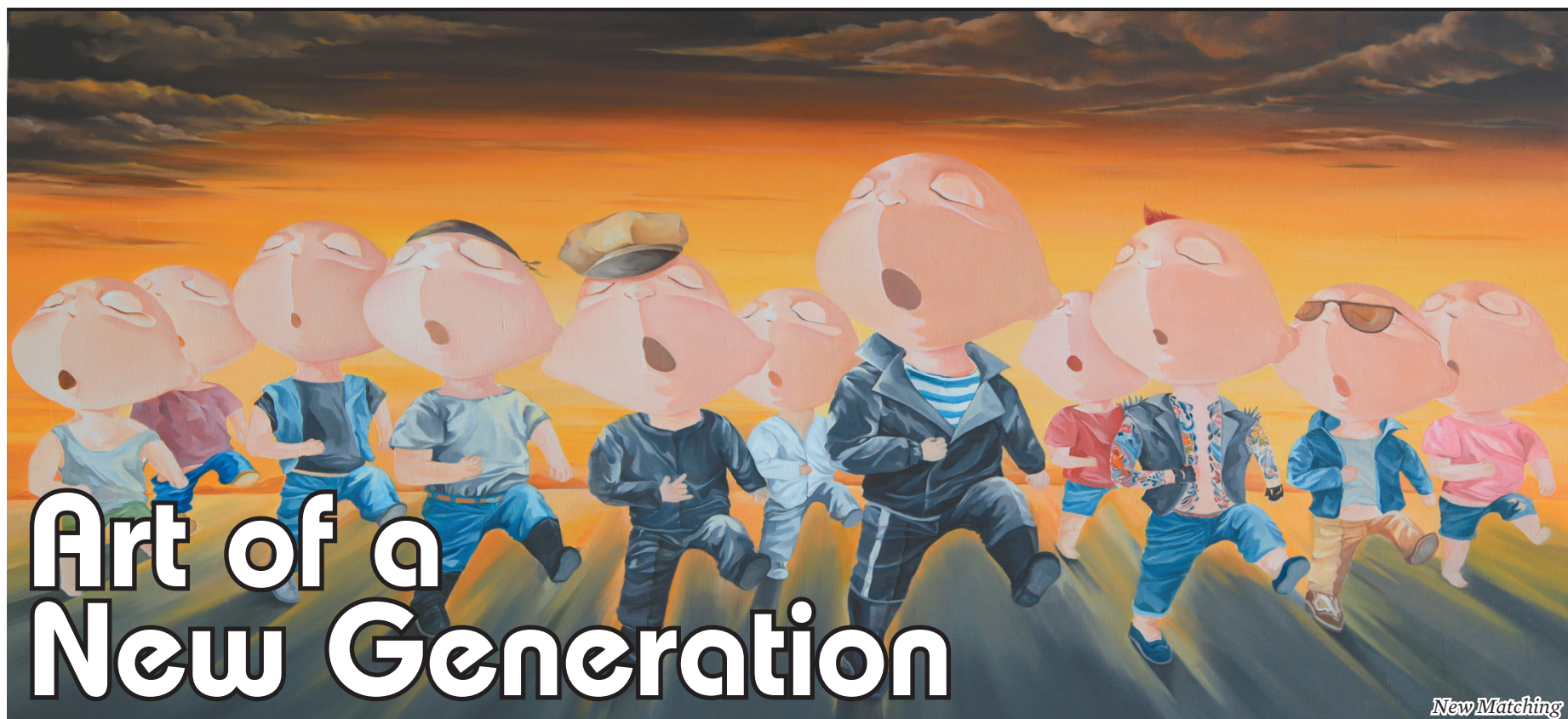
Stop in for Volume 4 of School Bar's "Bad Education" series with Bedstars, Me Guan, Hell City and Green Tea Bitches.

🕒 October 4, 9:30-11:30 pm

📍 53 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng

💎 50 yuan; ladies free

ARTISTS



BY LYNNE WANG

The art community has been abuzz over the paintings of Wu Qiong. Although he is originally from Beijing, Wu's solo exhibition at 798 Art District was the first time his work has been exhibited at home.

The collection of more than 20 oil paintings and corresponding sculptures created from 2012 to 2014 show off the young artist's distinct style that has no imitators.

Chinese Children

Born in Beijing in 1981, Wu began to study painting from the age of eight. He moved to Singapore to continue his studies after graduating from Beijing Normal University with a degree in oil painting.

It wasn't until he was invited to create several works for a Singapore gallery in 2006 that Wu landed on what has become his signature style.

"I came back home and thought about what to paint. Then, bits of my childhood in Beijing came popping into my head. I decided to capture things that I imagined, but which I never realized as a child," Wu said.

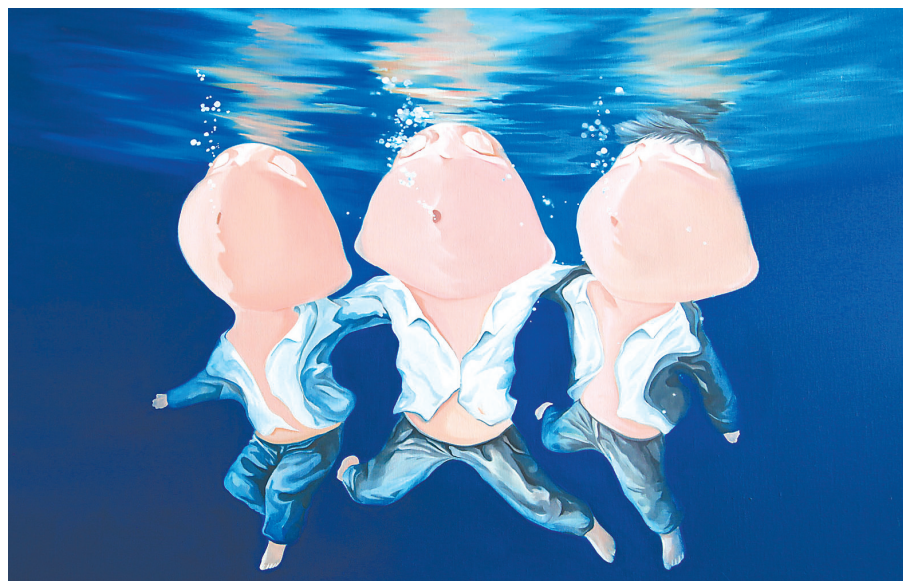
The series won Wu the attention of numerous collectors, and during the next several years he created many paintings with subtle variations.

While his earlier works carried an air of nostalgia and homesickness, he shifted to happier images in 2007. His "Born in the 1980s" series contains many familiar scenes for any child of the generation.

The trend continued into 2010, when Wu focused his style on storybooks and classic cartoons like the popular Calabash Brothers.

As he refined his technique, Wu gravitated toward soft colors and minimalist images that gave viewers room to imagine.

"In the past, I tried to make my paintings say exactly what was I thinking. Now I just try to make them a basic frame for



'80s ART Three Brothers

Photos by Wu Qiong



In Here



Wind

my feelings. It lets viewers apply their own imagination to my works for something truly personal," said by Wu.

One of the ways he attempts to resonate with viewers is through the child-like figures. "We might imagine different

things, but when we close our eyes we can find an emotional link. The kids in my paintings have their eyes closed, and I use them as a conduit to interact with my viewers," Wu said.

A New Genre

Wu's works walk the line between post-pop and neo-cartoons, said local art critic Yang Wei.

"Because he studied abroad and grew up during an era of rapid economic reforms, Wu is detached from the domestic pop art movement of earlier generations. His art displays features of the "New Human" movement that is highly connected with cartoons," Yang said.

The blending of styles gives Wu's oil paintings an air of super-realism.

"By throwing children into this visual contexts, Wu's works indicate grown-up experience and real social scenarios," said by Dao Zi, an artist at Syart Museum. Using his cartoonish Chinese kids, Wu has developed a distinctive way of interpreting the physical world.

As a young artist, Wu is eager to avoid genre labels. "Some viewers might perceive me as a cartoonist, but I don't want to lock myself into a genre without any thought," he said.

That casual attitude might be the best way to understand his works.

"Art doesn't have to stand above the masses or be difficult to understand," Wu said. "For me, art is unrelated to price. If my viewers understand what I'm trying to express, I'll be happy no matter how popular or unpopular my work becomes," Wu said.

Recently, Wu has partnered with several design firms to create derivative products based on his works. During the next few months he will be exhibiting his paintings in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. ■

wuqiong.artron.net

吴琼当代艺术家



DRAMA



CFP Photo

Emperor Grapples with Life as a Commoner in New Drama

BY YANG XIN

The fall of the Qing Dynasty and the forced conversion of the “Son of Heaven” into an ordinary citizen has been a popular topic for biopics.

But while films typically begin in the palace, the drama *Citizen* opens in the Fushun War Criminals Management Center.

On the stage, Aisin-Gioro Puyi is show-

ing falling into illusions where he still believes himself the emperor of China. His imagined dialogues with the former concubines Wan Rong and Wen Xiu reflect a profound inner struggle to adapt to his new identity as a citizen of New China.

“It’s a setting that helps the audience probe deep into the character of Puyi,” said Feng Yuanzheng, the actor

who plays the emperor in middle age. “Puyi is a role that is virtual on stage but real in history.”

“I’ve been reading Puyi’s own writings and watching TV adaptations of his life since middle school. There are huge differences between the stories on the big screen and his own experience,” Feng said. “Stories about the last emperor rarely give

us insight into his inner feelings. That’s why *Citizen* is innovative in exploring and expressing this part of history.”

The second most important figure in the play is Wen Xiu, the first imperial concubine to “divorce” an emperor in Chinese history.

“Wen is not an easy character to play,” Feng said. “She is a noble young lady from a traditional background who is entranced with personal freedom and independence. Actress Mao Junjie does an amazing job showing how her powerful character butts heads with feudal tradition.”

The Beijing Times said *Citizen* leaves a stronger impression of Puyi’s life than any other historical drama. “Its scenes of Puyi being given a common name by Chairman Mao and an old lady kowtowing when he shows up at the People’s Congress reflect China’s stages of social development,” it wrote.

But for all the praise, *Citizen* has been mired in controversy.

Jin Youzhi, the last emperor’s 86-year-old brother formerly known as Aisin-Gioro Puren, penned a letter of protest against Wang Qingxiang, the historian who consulted on *Citizen*’s script.

“The way Wang has chosen to depict myself and my brother has almost no factual basis,” Jin wrote.

“Moreover, some of the pictures and photos he provided to the publishers were borrowed from my family and published without permission.”

But while the old generation quarrels over alleged copyright infringement, viewers seem to be enjoying one of the most immersive stage depictions of the end of imperial China.

Since its premier on September 18, *Citizen* has been winning high reputation from the audience. ■

Beijing Capital Theatre

⌚ Through October 7

📍 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng

💰 80-880 yuan



Photo by Douban

Two Against the World One Life Lost, Another Discovered

BY DIAO DIAO

For 20 years, Luo Guangming has lived a normal life with his parents and disabled brother. But that normal life falls to pieces the day Luo is struck blind by a rare genetic disease in the indie film *Tell Me a Beautiful World*.

Doctors reveal the cause to be Luo’s parents, who are actually first degree cousins. In the following days, his relationship with girlfriend falls apart and his collapses in shambles.

Panicked, desperate and resentful of his parents for even conceiving him, Luo attempts suicide by lying in front of a train. When the train passes without incident, he realizes he was lying on the wrong tracks.

Having even failed at suicide, Luo is

forced to learn to live with his disability.

On the way back from the train station he hears a crying girl. He decided to pick her up, take her home and raise her even after his brother points out she has a cleft lip.

Luo spares no expense to care for the girl, who he names Xiao Xiao.

The surgery to repair her lips costs 40,000 yuan, but even after Luo raises the money Xiao Xiao is unable to speak clearly. He decides to call her Shuo Shuo to encourage her to speak like a normal kid.

When his parents die, Luo takes Shuo Shuo to the big city. But life for the two is anything but easy. Shuo Shuo eventually overcomes her disability and succeeds at reading a poem in front of her class.

Tell Me a Beautiful World was nominated for the Best Film Award at the 21th

Beijing Student Film Festival.

The popular film explores themes of life with limitations and the bonds shared by people who struggle.

Through extensive use of flashbacks, the film explores co-dependency and destiny. Most of the scenes are shot in mountainous areas and shabby villages.

The movie is free of music and sound effects and spoken in Sichuan dialect. While that may make it hard for many viewers to follow the film, viewers say the actors’ strong performances always make the meaning shine clear. ■

🔗 1905.com/vod/play/743181.shtml



Scan and Watch!

A LOCAL OUTINGS



(CFP Photo)

Nature Rolls Out the Red Carpet in Pinggu



JINHAI Fall views at Lake Jinhai (CFP Photo)

BY YANG XIN

While late September and October are the best times to take in the capital's changing leaves, you might have to pass on popular vantage points like the Fragrant Hills unless you enjoy seeing more people than foliage.

But Beijing has less crowded options for fall scenery. The city's surrounding mountains are home to sprawling forests covered in yellow and red smoke trees and maples.

Beijing Today is introducing scenic locations in Pinggu that, thanks to their great scenery and light traffic, make for perfect alternatives.



(CFP Photo)

Lake Jinhai

Located in eastern Pinggu District, Lake Jinhai is Beijing's third largest reservoir. The lake is bounded on three sides by rolling hills with lush vegetation. With the arrival of fall, the trees and shrubs become a red-and-gold carpet that is reflected in the picturesque lake.

For the best experience, rent a row boat to circle the lake and take in the colorful sights. The steep walls will echo back any tunes you hum.

Among numerous peaks, Heng Hill is known as the most impressive site with the most interesting history. Furnished with pines and cypresses, its shape resembles a dragon diving into the lake.

Two huge marks that resemble giant footsteps gave rise to a legend that the Immortal Erlang once stepped on the hill. It is also believed that this was the place where the two Taoists Dong and Ge fashioned pills of immortality by capturing vital energy from the hill.

Camel Peak is another famous sight near Lake Jinhai. Legend has it that

a camel convoy passing by in the 17th century was swallowed up by a hole in the ground. The only one that managed to escape had its legs trapped in the rocks of the cliff, giving Camel Peak its modern shape.

When sunset arrives, Camel Peak becomes a silhouette against the brilliant pink and orange colors.

Although it was originally a cultural and religious destination, Lake Jinhai is transforming into a modern retreat. Its facilities include cruise ships tours, speedboat rides and banana boat rides.

The journey itself can be enjoyable for those driving to the lake on their own. The red leaves circling the lake and the vast expanse of water offer an amazing view on approach.

"The Fragrant Hills are like a sentence while Lake Jinhai is an entire story. No matter how you choose to compare them the lake will always win," said a Pinggu resident. "The brilliant red hills and vast expanse of land speak to both the eyes and heart."

Lake Jinhai is located about 85 kilometers from Beijing's Second Ring Road. ■



JINHAI Red leaves Photo by Yue Leng via Sohu

- 🚌 Board Bus 918 at the Dongzhimen Long-distance Bus Station and get off at Jinhaihu.
- 🚌 Board Bus 918 from Dongzhimen Long-distance Bus Station and get off at Pinggu. Transfer to Minibus 9 and get off at Jinhaihu.
- 🕒 7 am-6:30 pm
- 💰 30 yuan, 15 yuan for students and seniors

Q CLASSIFIEDS

CULTURE



Photo Exhibition: China's Empty Quarters

China's development is a story of urbanization, and that phenomenon has no better representative than the Megacity. For most Europeans, the thought of cities the size of whole countries is mind-boggling. Since Marcus Schultz has been in China, he has been fleeing the cities whenever possible. This exhibition showcases 12 years of attempted escape.

The Chinese countryside is more than just a source of food, resources and an endless stream of cheap labor. It is a cultural Galapagos and a reserve for the country's lost identity.

Marcus Schultz will be leaving China at the end of this year with plans to return in 2017 to see what changes next. The exhibition features a number of scenes, landscapes and portraits captured over more than a decade.

- ☉ September 27, 7:30-8:30 pm
- Shuangcheng Cafe, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng



Fall of the Forbidden City

Why did the man who commissioned the Forbidden City kill more than 2,000 concubines and eunuchs upon completion of his new home? Why did officials bow to an empty throne for 32 years? How did an Emperor's love for his mother bring the Middle Kingdom to its knees?

Find out what led to the fall of Beijing's most famous imperial palace by signing up for this informative and entertaining Newmen Tours' talk at Culture Yard.

- ☉ September 28, 4-5 pm
- Culture Yard, 10 Shique Hutong, Dongcheng
- 💎 70 yuan

MUSIC



Mumiy Troll

Taking their name from a character in the famous children's books of Tovi Jansson, Mumiy Troll is one of Russia's most popular and critically acclaimed contemporary pop-rock acts of the 1990s and 2000s. With offbeat romantic lyrics and the intelligent, charismatic presence of songwriter and frontman Ilya Lagutenko, the band developed outside the Russian music scene with most of its production work in England. Although experimenting with different musical genres over the years, Mumiy Troll has developed an idiosyncratic sound halfway between traditional Russian rock and Brit-pop.

- ☉ September 30, 9-11:30 pm
- Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng
- 💎 350 yuan (door); 250 yuan (presale)

ART



Bei Shui: A Drift of Being

Bei Shui has had 20 solo exhibitions in China and Germany since 1995 and more than 30 group exhibitions at notable museums in Beijing, Shanghai and galleries across Germany.

In 2007, four paintings from his Dialogue series were acquired by the art museum of the German Savings Bank Headquarters. His most recognized painting, Joss Paper, was acquired by the Macao Art Museum in 2008. Since then, his works have diverged into multiple art forms embracing his unique eclecticism towards contemporary art.

What makes Bei stand out from many of his Chinese contemporaries is his tenacious vitality. His stunning works capture his feelings and thoughts about humanity, nature and society. In his latest exhibition, more than 60 of his narratively playful creations will be hung on the first, second and third levels of the hotel's hallways and a special "Art Suite."

- ☉ Daily through September 30
- The Peninsula Hotel Beijing, 8 Jinyu Hutong, Wangfujing, Dongcheng
- 🌐 beijing.peninsula.com/en/discover

TRAVEL



Gubeikou Great Wall camping (2 days)

On this 8 kilometer family friendly camping trip we follow the Gubeikou Great Wall as it winds through Beijing's mountains.

The big draws for this camping trip are the fantastic scenery, a lunch deserving 2 Michelin stars and a camp site with a view of two sections of the Great Wall. All camp gear will be delivered to the campsite so you can enjoy a relaxing hike.

After breakfast, we will have a short hike down the wall into the valley where a driver will be waiting to pick up the group.

Bring comfortable hiking or sports shoes and long pants. One medium day pack should be enough for two people. Make sure to bring warm clothes for the evening.

- ☉ September 27, 9:30 am-1 pm
- 💎 950 yuan
- 🌐 chinahiking.cn

PARTY



Tiger & Woods

One day, while digging for records in a dusty basement, these two fine gentlemen nearly got into a fight over a nameless boogie record which is so rare that even the usual disco detectives hadn't discovered it. Actually, they still haven't.

Without a name – and only identified by a test pressing sticker dedicated to the NYC-disco-DJ-legend Walter "Hot Trix" Scott – the 72-year old owner of the record store accidentally placed the record on his belt-driven turntable. Both were so full of lust to get their hands on this precious relic that they rushed to the booth with fistfuls of cash.

Some Italian profanities and chest-beating later, Larry and David decided to buy the album together and take it to Tiger's studio.

Unfortunately, the fruits of their teamwork never saw the light of day due to a hard drive crash. But the guys kept on working, and as they timidly presented their early works to a mutual friend who said, "This is what DJ Sneak should sound like today!"

- ☉ September 27, 10 pm-4 am
- Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Bei Lu, Chaoyang
- 💎 60 yuan

COMMUNITY



Dog Obedience Training at ICVS

The International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) is delighted to offer puppy and adult dog obedience training programs to help Beijingers enjoy a happier and more harmonious life with their pets.

Dr. Claudia Sanne, a German medical doctor, dog trainer and behaviorist, will be sharing her knowledge and expertise in dog psychology, bonding with pets, puppy socialization, leadership training, toilet training and behavioral management.

Sanne has owned and trained many breeds of dogs and cooperated with top trainers in Germany and South Africa. For more than 20-years, Sanne has worked with dog owners, canine rehabilitation centers and shelters to socialize and train dogs, helping owners live happier lives with their pets and increasing successful adoptions of abandoned, stray, rescued and shelter dogs.

ICVS is a full service international standard animal hospital and pet care facility providing spay and neuter surgeries, soft tissue and orthopedic surgeries, dental cleanings, hospitalizations, X-rays, ultrasounds, blood tests, legal rabies vaccinations, microchipping, rabies antibody titre testing for export, boarding, grooming, dog training, behavior counseling, SAFE pet foods and accessories. All services in English and Mandarin.

- ☉ September 27, 11 am-noon
- International Center for Veterinary Services, 13-16 Rongke Ganlancheng Shangjie, Futongxi Dajie, Wangjing, Chaoyang
- 💎 Free

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HOTPOT TIME!



HOTPOT The modern style of Beijing's shuanyangrou hotpot

CFP Photos



Beijing's coal-fired copper pot



Yuanyang hotpot

Old Beijing Hotpot in Haidian

BY DIAO DIAO

Gaoxing Hotpot is one of Beijing's most popular hotpot restaurants. It's famous for its good service, reasonable prices and Old Beijing flavor.

Like many hotpot restaurants, Gaoxing allows diners to order half portions of most dishes so they can try more foods without wasting any. The basic soup pot is the typical Yuanyang style with both spicy and mild broths.

The lamb is fresh and soft but still a little chewy. A full portion is enough for three persons, and the beef servings are equally ample. The xiahua, balls made of beaten shrimp and fish, is popular and comes in large portions.

In addition to meat, Gaoxing serves duck and pig blood and other vegetables.

Gaoxing's most ordered food is its cod cheese balls, a house special. A plate comes with eight balls made by wrapping cod meat around a cheese filling. While cheese and fish might seem like an odd combination, the flavor is especially fresh. Similar balls made of crab meat are also popular.

Gaoxing Budai is another popular house special. As its name might suggest, the ingredient is a plate of "bags" woven from tofu. Most people like to put the bags in at the start of the meal so they can absorb as much of the broth as possible.

As an Old Beijing restaurant, Gaoxing also serves traditional Beijing shaobing and cold suanmei juice to balance out the spicy and greasy hotpot.

Other Beijing snacks like matuan, fried sticky rice balls rolled in sesame seeds, are also served. Expect to pay about 300 yuan for a party of four. ■



Crab meat balls



Budai

Photos by dianping.com

Warm Up with Hotpot

BY DIAO DIAO

Beijing's notoriously short fall is upon us and the nights are getting cold. It's the season for dressing in layers, breaking out the thick bedding and warming up with a bowl of hot broth.

Hotpot is definitely the most popular food of the season.

Most Beijingers stop eating hotpot during the summer because the combination of steam and high temperatures cause heavy sweating. With brisk fall air to wick away the steam, hotpot season has returned.

Chinese hotpot has its origins in Sichuan province. Unlike soups, which are prepared in advance, hotpot allows diners to order fresh ingredients and cook them right at the table. Most of the flavor comes from the soup stocks and dipping sauces used.

Over the last two millennia, hotpot has spread throughout China and evolved into different styles.

Chongqing hotpot is the most similar to the original Sichuan style. It's often known as Yuanyang hotpot because the stock pot is always divided into two parts, one spicy and one mild.

Guangdong hotpot mostly uses seafood and a mild soup stock that's high in calcium. It tastes light and it is especially popular with pregnant women and the elderly.

Hangzhou hotpot is served in smaller pots and makes heavy use of leafy greens and fungi. Cabbages and mushrooms are considered essential ingredients.

If you can't live without the meat, try Hubei hotpot which is almost entirely

meat. Most Hubei style restaurants sell chicken, duck, rabbit and other meats for their hotpot.

Shanghai hotpot is a mix of styles with meat, seafood and vegetables and a less oily stock.

Beijing hotpot, also known as shuanyangrou, is traditionally made using a coal-fired copper pot. Most families have switched to electric pots or hotplates. Lamb is an absolute must, and many families like to add beef and other vegetables. The hotpot tastes even better with homemade sesame sauce.

Tangsuan, a kind of garlic aged in sugar, and Beijing shaobing are almost always served with Beijing hotpot. ■

MAKE YOUR OWN WITH THIS RECIPE

Easy Hotpot Dip from Scratch

BY DIAO DIAO

If your home has a big pot and plenty of tasty vegetables and meat, you're already halfway to making your own hotpot.

Finding a quality dip is the other half of the battle. Make your own from these common household ingredients.

Ingredients:

- ☐ 1 clove garlic
- ☐ 10g sliced chili peppers
- ☐ 10g sesame paste
- ☐ 15g peanut butter
- ☐ 10g bean paste
- ☐ 100mL vinegar
- ☐ sesame oil
- ☐ salt
- ☐ sugar
- ☐ water



The Steps:

1. Mix the sesame paste and bean paste in a bowl. Stir until smooth and add the chili peppers, vinegar, sugar, salt and sesame oil.
2. Add the garlic last. You can adjust the amount of peanut butter according to personal preference. You can
3. also use crushed peanuts in place of peanut butter.
4. If the sauce tastes thick or unbalanced, add water to thin it out.
5. A dip made of sesame paste will not keep for long. Any leftover dip will have to be discarded after two days, so only make as much as you need for one meal.

Gaoxing Hotpot

⌚ 11 am-11 pm

📍 Jia 20, Zhichun Lu, Haidian District

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